

Requester: Richard Price

“LGBTQ”

From : [REDACTED]
To : vjobe@murrayschools.org, wanderson@murrayschools.org
Subject : a proud Horizon Alumni disappointed in the School District

Ms. Anderson and Ms. Jobe,

I apologize for adding to the mountain of emails you both have to deal with on a daily basis. I also understand that you may not be the best people to direct this email to, but I was so bothered by what I read in the recent Salt Lake Tribune [article](#) that I felt compelled to write this email.

First, let me say thank you to both of you for dedicating yourselves to education. My wife is a school psychologist and is currently working as an admin, so I appreciate all of the time and stress that come with your jobs. I attended Horizon Elementary from 1995-2002 and was very fortunate to have some incredible teachers, principles, aids, staff, and volunteers who helped me during my elementary school years. I went on to attend Riverview and Murray High, and generally have good things to say about the Murray School District.

A relative of mine has a child currently enrolled at Horizon and was telling me all of about the equity book bundle and the diversity council. I was excited that Murray and Horizon specifically, had put these in place. I thought it was incredible that children were going to learn about the work we all need to do in making our worlds more accepting, supportive, and compassionate. I commend you both for implementing programs that facilitate students learning about race, gender, and LGBTQ issues that affect everyone. Diversity is something that must be celebrated and explored, and these programs were a great step towards that.

However, the response to a teacher reading a book about a person who was transgendered is an extreme overreaction that supports the efforts of the transphobic members of our community. This teacher was the not the first and will not be the last who reads a book to the class that they have not yet read and/or will upset the parents of some of the students. I find it disappointing and extreme to cancel the book bundle (of which "Max" was not part of) and to suspend the diversity council. This is an asinine response to a book that is objectively age appropriate and important for students to see. I hate to see the transphobes win, and for Horizon students to be deprived because a couple of loud parents are uncomfortable with their children learning about people who exist in the world.

I ask that you share my concerns with the district and resume the book bundle and council ASAP. Murray has suffered long enough from giving in to the few but very loud ultra conservative community members.

Thank you,
[REDACTED]

From : [REDACTED]
To : info@murrayschools.org, ddean@murrayschools.org
Cc : dmcdougal@murrayschools.org, wanderson@murrayschools.org, vjobe@murrayschools.org
Subject : Re: Equity Book Bundles & Diversity Equity Council

Hello,

I came across the SLTrib article this morning in which it stated that a Murray teacher read a book from the equity book bundle (that was brought to class by another student it seems) resulting in alleged backlash from parents of students in the school.

In response, you chose not to stand up for the community you claim to include and suspended both the book bundle program AND the Diversity Equity Council.

How can your website state that you're committed to providing equality, diversity, and inclusion while suspending and removing programs that are built to incorporate the aforementioned topics? Not only are you suspending books around the LGBTQ community, the books in the bundle include topics about race/anti-racism and books in languages other than English.

Additionally, the article stated that the district will be speaking with teachers about what they can and cannot read to the students? I understand age-appropriate content, but it is unacceptable to ban teachers from including their students of color or students who may be part of the LGBTQ community by reading literature that speaks to them and/or represents them.

Here are some helpful articles on the suicide rates of children and teens:
<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/resources/preventing-suicide/facts-about-suicide/>
<https://www.glaad.org/blog/study-finds-some-lgbt-youth-color-more-likely-attempt-suicide>

In summation, I am appalled by your decision and hope you will do what it takes to make this right.

Sincerely,
a Concerned Member of this Community